

## Message Text

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43

ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8705

INFO AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY REYKJAVIK

AMCONSUL GOTEBOG BY POUCH

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, SW

SUBJECT: SWEDISH ELECTION CAMPAIGN: THE FINAL DAYS

REF: STOCKHOLM 5085

1. THE RESULTS OF THE FINAL SIFO PUBLIC OPINION POLL BEFORE THE ELECTIONS (REFTEL) PROVIDE THE BACKDROP TO CAMPAIGN ACTIVITIES IN THE REMAINING TWO DAYS. THE FAILURE OF THE CENTER TO GAIN, DESPITE PARTY LEADER FALLDIN'S SUCCESS IN PUSHING THE NUCLEAR ENERGY ISSUE, COUPLED WITH THE RESURGENCE OF THE SOCIALISTS TO A NARROW LEAD, GIVES THE MOMENTUM TO THE GOVERNMENT. BUT THE OUTCOME REMAINS VERY MUCH IN DOUBT.

2. THE MAJOR EVENT IN THE REMAINING DAYS IS A THREE-HOUR TELEVISED DEBATE TO BE HELD SEPTEMBER 17 AMONG THE LEADERS OF THE MAJOR PARTIES. SOME OBSERVERS LOOK TO THIS DEBATE TO PRODUCE WHATEVER SHIFTS

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AMONG VOTERS MAY OCCUR JUST BEFORE THE ELECTIONS.

PALME CAN BE EXPECTED TO ATTEMPT TO PIT THE  
OPPOSITION LEADERS AGAINST ONE ANOTHER AND TO  
DISPLAY THEIR DISAGREEMENT BEFORE THE ENTIRE NATION.  
HIS OPPONENTS MOST CERTAINLY WILL ATTEMPT TO MAKE  
PALME TAKE A STAND ON THE "DIFFICULT" ISSUES FOR  
HIS GOVERNMENT, SUCH AS SOCIALIZATION, THE  
MEIDNER FUNDS, AND NUCLEAR ENERGY.

3. FOLLOWING THE RELEASE OF THE PAST SIFO POLL,  
THE MINISCULE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC PARTY (KDS)  
HAS ATTRACTED MUCH ATTENTION. WITH A 1.8 PERCENT RATING  
IN THE POLL, AND NO CHANCE TO REACH THE 4 PERCENT  
REQUIRED TO ENTER PARLIAMENT, THE KDS HAS BECOME  
THE FOCUS OF INTENSE LAST-MINUTE EFFORTS BY THE  
OPPOSITION TO GATHER MORE VOTES.

4. PAST POLL RESULTS HAVE SHOWN THAT NEARLY 80 PERCENT  
OF KDS SUPPORTERS SHARE "BOURGEOIS PARTY" VALUES,  
AND IF THEY DID NOT VOTE FOR THE KDS, THEY COULD  
SUPPLY THE EXTRA PERCENTAGE NEEDED FOR AN OPPOSITION  
VICTORY. OPPOSITION SUPPORTERS AND LEADERS ARE  
URGING KDS MEMBERS NOT TO THROW THEIR VOTES  
AWAY, AND TO INSTEAD CONTRIBUTE TO A CHANGE IN  
GOVERNMENT. THEY ARGUE THAT VOTES FOR THE  
KDS CONTRIBUTE TO SOCIALIST VICTORY BY DIMINISHING  
THE OPPOSITION TOTAL, A CHARGE LEVELLED AT THE  
KDS AFTER THE 1973 ELECTIONS. PRESSING THE  
ARGUMENT, LIBERAL LEADER AHLMARK POINTED OUT THAT  
"IF ONE FINDS A CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT IMPORTANT,  
ONE CANNOT IGNORE THE FACT THAT A VOTE FOR THE  
KDS IS MEANINGLESS."

5. KDS LEADER ALF SVENSSON REJECTED THE PLEAS,  
INSISTING THAT KDS WILL CONTINUE TO CAMPAIGN.  
HE PLEDGED TO HOLD HIS SUPPORT, WHICH HAS BEEN  
FAIRLY STABLE SINCE THE 1973 ELECTION, AND SAID  
THAT THE KDS HAS TOO MANY DIFFERENCES WITH THE  
OPPOSITION PARTIES TO SUPPORT THEM.

6. COMMENT: KDS LEADER SVENSSON COULD POSSIBLY  
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DELIVER THE ELECTION TO THE OPPOSITION IF HE CHOSE  
TO SUPPORT THE NON-SOCIALISTS, FOR WHOM ONE  
PERCENTAGE POINT COULD MEAN THE GAME. HOWEVER,  
SWEDISH POLITICAL PARTIES HAVE NEVER BEEN ONES  
TO COOPERATE. ATTEMPTS BY THE OPPOSITION PARTIES  
TO SIPHON HIS SUPPORTERS COME A BIT LATE TO BE  
VERY EFFECTIVE, THOUGH THEIR ARGUMENT IS A TELLING  
ONE AND MAY CONVINCE SOME KDS SUPPORTERS TO

SWITCH. IN THESE, THE FINAL DAYS OF A PHOTO-  
FINISH CAMPAIGN, THE GOAL OF EACH OF THE PARTIES  
WILL BE TO ROUND UP EVERY WARM BODY IT CAN.  
SMITH

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